

Red Hill, Law Office  
South end of State Route 677, 1 mile  
south of intersection with State  
Route 619  
Brookneal  
Charlotte County  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1034-A

HABS  
VA  
20-BROOK,  
1A-

PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Virginia	COUNTY Charlotte	TOWN OR VICINITY Brookneal
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Red Hill, Law Office		HABS NO. VA-1034-A
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) South end of State Route 677, 1 mile south of intersection with State Route 619		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) probably late 18th century	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Red Hill plantation was the last home of Virginia patriot Patrick Henry. This building was his last law office and is the only original building remaining on the site, all the others being reconstructions.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Frame with clapboarding		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) 3-bay front; 1½ stories, gable roof; 1-story front porch; hipped roof dormers		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Major restoration has included the removal of the porch and dormers plus a radical change in roof pitch		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Open to the public as part of the Red Hill Historic Museum		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Listed on National Register of Historic Places (Information above taken from nomination)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Druscilla J. Null, HABS	DATE 8/31/83	

Addendum to  
Red Hill, Law Office  
Patrick Henry National Memorial  
Brookneal Vicinity  
Charlotte County  
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1034-A

HABS  
VA,  
20-BROOK,  
1-A-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20013-7127

HABSV  
VA,  
20-BROOK  
1-A-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

RED HILL - LAW OFFICE  
(Patrick Henry National Memorial)

Addendum to HABS No. VA-1034-A

Location: Approximately 1.1 miles south of State Route 619, 5.3 miles south<sup>east</sup>~~west~~ of Brookneal, in Charlotte County, Virginia.

Current Owner/Occupant: Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation.

Significance: Red Hill was the final home and burial site of Patrick Henry (1736-99), prominent Revolutionary War and early national patriot, politician, orator, and lawyer. Henry was a leader in provoking and organizing resistance to British government of the colonies. He served as governor of Virginia five times in the 1770-80s during the American Revolution and its aftermath, and led the opposition to ratifying the U.S. Constitution in Virginia in 1788. He thereafter withdrew from state politics and resumed a successful law practice. Henry occupied Red Hill from 1794 until 1799, the year of his death. Red Hill is a 1950s interpretation of a typical well-to-do eighteenth-century planter's home in Southside Virginia.

The buildings have all been reconstructed to some degree, including the law office, which was combined with a mid nineteenth-century law office and later "restored." Portions are thus purported to be original to Henry's tenure.

In 1978 the U.S. Department of the Interior recognized Red Hill as a national landmark and entered the property in the National Register of Historic Places. In 1986 the property was designated a National Memorial to Patrick Henry by an act of Congress.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The original Patrick Henry plantation was built at least by 1794; the much-altered and enlarged dwelling burned in February 1919. Restoration of the law office was completed in 1956.
2. Architect: Stanhope Johnson designed the reconstruction.
3. Original plans and construction: A copy of Stanhope Johnson's 1956 reconstruction plans are on file in the Red Hill archives. All buildings at Red Hill date from the restoration/reconstruction.

B. Historical Context: The eighteenth-century designation of a dependency as a "law office" would not require that this traditional service building appear any different

than other plantation "offices." This building form is typically a frame, one-story, square or rectangular plan. The Henry law office is just such a structure, with two rooms and a central chimney that serves two firebox openings. For a general context, see Dwelling report.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The office is a simple, two-unit, one-story frame building with a gable roof and center chimney.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.
3. Additions, alterations: The present structure is a restoration, based on Stanhope Johnson's memory of the appearance of the building prior to the Harrison alterations. It is believed that portions of this building date to the late eighteenth century, although there is no documentation to support this. Patrick Henry's office, moved from the rear of the dwelling, and the later office of William Wirt Henry, from in front of the dwelling, were combined about 1905-07 and the resultant "cottage" was placed in line with the dwelling, between it and the burial ground, south of the existing path. Presumably the Wirt Henry structure was removed in the 1950s during reconstruction.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundations: Brick laid in Flemish bond. The land slopes slightly down from west to east; three courses of brick are exposed beneath the west end, nine beneath the east end. A wood-louvered vent is in the foundation, centered beneath each window on the north and south facades.
2. Walls: The walls are clad with lapped, beaded, horizontal, 4-3/8" weatherboards and cornermolding.
3. Structural systems, framing: Wood frame.
4. Chimneys: A center brick ridge chimney rises 28 brick courses above the roofline, which serves two fireplace openings that were probably constructed at two different times.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways, doors: Two sets of double wood doors, in the north and south facades, access the law office space and are on axis with each other; they are approached by three flagstone steps. A third

single doorway on the east facade accesses the space currently set up as a chamber; it, too, is approached by four flagstone steps. The double doors feature three panels each; the single east door features six. All three doorways are recessed, with wood frames and molding.

- b. Windows, shutters: The dwelling has five six-over-six-light, double-hung wood sash, two each symmetrically framing the door on the north and south facades. An identical window is centered on the west facade. All have wood sills and molding. All five windows are flanked by louvered wood shutters. Two wood framed fixed-louver openings at the peak of the pediments provide ventilation for the attic.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable, with the ridge oriented east to west. It is covered with wood shingles, lapped at the ridge.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The eaves are boxed, with shingle and bed molding.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: The rectangular plan is divided into two rooms by a wall and center chimney. The doors on the north and south walls enter into the west room. The chimney appears to have been constructed in two phases because the breast portions are different widths; there is a firebox in each room. A door at the south end of the interior partition wall connects the west and east rooms.
- 2. Flooring: Finished boards running east to west. The hearth in the west chamber is raised 1-1/2" and is framed by wood molding. The east-chamber hearth is described by architect Johnson as a 'pad.' This 5-0" raised brick base supported a Franklin stove whose vent is located 3'-2" x 2'-11" from the floor. This base is likewise surrounded by wood molding.
- 3. Wall, ceiling finish: The ceiling of the west chamber is wood boards, articulated by seven exposed rafters; molding covers the juncture of rafter and ceiling boards. The walls are clad with horizontal boards that vary in width from 10-0" to 15-0". Paneling topped by a molded chair rail, 28-0" above the floor, extends around the room; wood baseboards are 7-0" high. The ceiling and walls in the east chamber are similar, but the ceiling rafters are hidden by a plank surface. Much of the east and north wall area is covered by built-in book shelves that extend three-quarters of the way up the wall, and by a built-in cabinet on the east wall, south of the east entry. Floor molding and baseboards extend around the room. A wood

bench is built into the wall beneath the window in the north wall. A ceiling panel in the east room provides access to the attic.

4. Doorways, doors: All doors are provided with wood door stops attached to the floor.
5. Hardware: The cast-iron and bronze hardware was made by James Peterson and Sons of Philadelphia. Hardware in the house consists of No. 1551 box locks and 9-1/4" H-hinges on all doors; door handles; and bronze candle lanterns for the two chambers. A cast-iron boot scraper is located by each entrance. A wood bench is located along the wall to the east of the south entrance. A mounting stile and cast-iron hitching post are located north-east of the east entry. Shutter hooks on exterior.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The law office is located northeast of the dwelling, away from the line of other dependencies, with its ridgeline running east-west. Although there are doors on the north, east and south facades, only the last two are used today. Southeast of the office is the walled cemetery. This is not the building's original site.
2. Outbuildings: Besides the law office, the estate includes the dwelling and five primary outbuildings that are described in individual reports: kitchen, VA-1034-C; smokehouse, VA-1034-D; privy, VA-1034-E; stables and carriage house, VA-1034-F; and slave cabin, VA-1034-G.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION: See Dwelling report, VA-1034-B.

View of Law Office at Red Hill, ca. 1907-12: Lucy Harrison occupancy,  
looking east, showing west facade of combined law offices-turned-residence.

Undated photograph  
Valentine Museum, Richmond

